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ABSTRACT

This report was written to assist in grounding and directing the use of the Elementary School Evaluation KIT within the context of real life educational decisionmaking. The KIT is an attempt to provide a cybernetic feedback system for schools to interact with aspects of their environments. The report notes that users must have some goals in mind before the KIT is used and be willing to provide resources, personnel, and facilities to administer, evaluate, and implement the KIT and the implications derived from the findings. Superintendents and school boards should indicate their willingness to cooperate with the evaluations and give assurance that funds and expertise will be available to implement forthcoming recommendations. (JF)

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DECISION MAKING IN THE SCHOOLS

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PREFACE

This report by Dr. Larkin had its genesis in the need to ground and direct the Elementary School Evaluation KIT within the context of real-life educational decision making. The Elementary School Evaluation KIT is viewed as an attempt to provide a cybernetic feedback system for schools to interact with aspects of their environments. In this light, considering the school as an open system operating in close interaction with its environments, the KIT can be more efficiently implemented to improve educational decision making and ultimately to make the schools a more responsive and functional component of American society.

Ralph Hoepfner

The improvement of public education seems to be a national high priority item; the need to improve education is reflected in the concerns of Congress and the educational profession, and in the demands of parents and students throughout the country. Researchers are being asked to help in the improvement of education, and are becoming more involved in the process of educational evaluation. The assumption is that before an educational program can be properly instituted, needs assessment must take place. After assessing the needs of the system, innovation occurs, resulting in improvement in the educational process.

At best, this is a highly complex process. Decisions must be made concerning what needs are to be assessed, who is to assess them, by what means, etc. There is also no guarantee that needs assessment will lead to more enlightened decision making by educational organizations. Most recommendations made by educational evaluators are made without concern for organizational constraints on decision makers. Also, professional educators tend to be caught up in the inertia of bureaucratic processes and structures.

The Elementary School Evaluation KIT (CSE, 1970) by providing vital information to the relevant decision makers in the field, offers hope to educational researchers that orderly change can occur in the schools. The anticipated effect of the Elementary School Evaluation KIT is to provide decision makers with vital information that will lead to intelligent, planned, rational decision making and create educational improvement.

These goals present considerable challenge to one creating a decision making model that might implement such improvement. First, the decision making model must be useful for designating the different types of decisions made in educational organizations. Second, it must be useful to the researcher by indicating who makes what decisions. Third, it must provide a clue as to how decisions affect the system and its environment. And fourth, the model must help in developing strategies of intervention in the decision making process. The Elementary School Evaluation KIT assumes that decision making can be improved through the provision of vital data; however, the mere presentation of data is not likely to improve decision making. Methods of presentation must be evolved so that the right person gets the proper information, at the proper time, and in the proper format.

There are many problems involved in the creation of a decision making model that will fulfill such demanding and varied functions. First, all school districts are not alike and cannot be visualized as a set of homogenous structures any more than all business firms can be conceptualized in the same way. There is a great deal of difference between General Motors and the corner grocery store. Though the variation among school districts is not quite so large, the analogy still fits. Second, every school district has its unique ways of distributing power throughout the system. Therefore, principals in X District may function as no more than expediters for the central administration, while in Y District, the principals have almost absolute autonomy to innovate in their schools. Third, every school district and every school has its own environment with unique needs and problems. The urban ghetto

school exists in quite a different setting than the suburban school or the rural school with four teachers for eight grades. The fourth problem deals with the decision making process itself. Though a rational analysis of decision making may make a model conceptually neat, it may not have any similarity to the actual reality of educational decision-making. Subjective elements such as values, attitudes and biases must be taken into consideration when regarding decision making because of their tremendous influences on the outcome of a decision. Educational decisions do involve value orientations; therefore, these non-rational aspects of decision making must be considered in any model.

THE MACROSTRUCTURE

The Task Environment

Dill (1958) defines the task environment of an organization as those parts of the environment that are "relevant or potentially relevant to goal setting and goal attainment." The task environment of the school consists of the pupils, their parents, the community, the state, and the nation.

The task environment is vitally important to the organization in which it exists. The survival of the organization depends on its ability to satisfy environmental needs. The goals of an organization are defined in terms of its task environment; that is, in a society, the organizations develop out of needs and have their purpose in the satisfaction of these needs. The needs of the environment are translated into organizational goals. The educational institution is established out of the society's need to have intergenerational continuity. In the words of Durkheim,

(1956, p. 95) "...all educational practices, whatever they may be, whatever differences there may be among them, have in common one essential characteristic: they all follow from the influence exercised by one generation on the following generation with an eye to adapting the latter to the social milieu in which it is called upon to live."

The educational organization develops an exchange relationship with its environment. The environment provides inputs in the form of pupils, resources, etc., so that the organization can perform its functions and, in return, the school provides the community with socialized youth who can carry out their roles within the community. The exchange process in education is highly complex because the products of the school system are human beings. Since human beings are not inert substances, they complicate the exchange process. For instance, the school is supposed to infuse certain attitudes in children, but the children are not passive containers which the educators fill. Because of the diffuse nature of what the school is to do with the youth and the difficulty of providing immediate results, the exchange is based primarily on the faith that the school is doing what it is supposed to do.

Generally speaking, the societal functions of education are translated into three general goals of education: socialization, allocation to the labor force, and provision for upward mobility. The socialization function is associated with internalizing attitudes and behaviors that the society holds dear. A recent study by the State of Pennsylvania (1968) centered around 10 "goals of education." Of the ten goals, eight were related to the socialization process:

1. Ability to cope with change
2. Understanding of the culture
3. Creativity
4. Health knowledge and practice
5. Citizenship education
6. A desire for learning
7. A positive self-image
8. Intergroup understanding

One basic complication of this socialization function in a pluralistic society is that different elements of society interpret such goals in different ways. For example, citizenship education is generally considered to be an important function of the schools; however, conservatives view good citizenship education in quite different ways than do liberals.

The allocation function is the process of differentially allocating youth to various occupational positions in the society. As society becomes more technological, the allocation process falls more and more within the purview of formal organizations, especially public educational institutions. Technical training begins in the elementary school with the teaching of the 3R's and continues through the professional schools on the campuses of universities. The schools act as channeling agencies, directing the youth into various occupational programs.

Associated with the allocation function is the function of providing for social mobility. As our society becomes more technologically advanced, the mobility function also falls more and more heavily upon the schools. A person's occupational role in this society increasingly depends on the amount of formal education he has. As other avenues close, the school becomes more responsible for allowing lower-class children to move into the middle class. The problem of equality of educational opportunity comes under the aegis of the mobility function of the school.

One aspect of the educational system is that the goals of education are quite ambiguous. This goal ambiguity has several advantages for the survival of the organization in the environment. First, the accountability of the organization is lowered because there is no way to measure its effectiveness. Second, it gives the organization great latitude of programs because almost any program can be justified in terms of diffuse goals. Third, goal ambiguity allows the organization more freedom to experiment with its programs.

The great disadvantage of goal ambiguity is that the only legitimation of the organization's existence is the faith of the people it serves. People in the various sectors of the organization's task environment must feel that the organization is doing an adequate job. Because the goals of the school are ambiguous, the school really has no valid criteria to use in convincing the community that it is doing a particularly good job. Achievement is about the only criterion that is ever used. But even then, no one is ever held accountable for poor achievement of the pupils. If pupil achievement is low, the schools will blame the community for not providing the children with the proper background and motivation. The educational institution plays the non-accountability game with its environment in order to legitimate the processes within the school. The big problem with this is that the school, because of its diffuse goals, must depend on the normative orientation of the community. That is, legitimation of the school's activities becomes an act of faith. Loss of faith in community institutions usually hits the schools hard. When the community begins to have problems with its youth, the legitimacy of the school is questioned first. Because legitimacy is an act of faith

on the part of the community, the school can be blamed for many community problems over which it has little or no control.

As it stands now, the educational institution has very little control over the legitimation process in terms of its relationship with the environment. Weber (1947) makes the point that one way of legitimating authority is by tradition. The legitimation of education is primarily based on past successes. However, since the society is changing so quickly, this traditional basis for legitimation is on the wane. Along with the technological advances in society a demand has arisen for educators to make their goals specific and to develop modes of conduct within the system to achieve these specific goals. Goal specificity means that the accountability of the schools will be in relation to more specific, measurable criteria. Without arguing the relative merits of accountability, it must be said that the schools, in this day and age, cannot depend on traditional modes of legitimation. For example, in the case of New York City, Rogers (1968) states that a parallel system is emerging to train students in skills that the school system failed to give. Business organizations have gone into the business of training "qualifiables" for employment. According to Rogers, "business strongly resents the fact that the schools' failures have forced it into these programs." Goal specificity is going to force the educational institution into direct accountability for its actions.

Characteristics of the Task Environment

Because the survival of the system depends on its ability to serve its task environment, the system needs pertinent information about its environment. Dill (1958) characterized task environments as homogenous

or heterogenous, stable or shifting, and unified or segmented. As far as decision making goes, these characteristics are very important. For example, a superintendent or a school board makes certain policy decisions, but characteristics of the task environment may determine the amount of conflict created by the policy. In a heterogenous, segmented task environment, practically any policy decision is going to produce a conflict between the segmented groups.

In addition to Dill's characteristics, one might consider an active-passive dimension. A task environment can be classified as to the amount of activity involved in the organization. For example, some communities are almost totally passive in relation to their educational institutions; changes in policies arouse neither an outcry nor support. Other communities tend to be very active in the organization; parents are always in the school and any change in policy is noted by the community. Schools in active task environments have much less autonomy in decision making processes than schools in passive task environments.

The concept of task environment is especially important to education because the educational system is an open one. There is a mechanism for the environment to participate directly in the functioning of the internal dynamics of the system. School districts' policies are established by a lay school board which is usually elected by the populace. The school board allows the community direct involvement in the educational decision making process. Legally, the school board makes policy and the administration carries out the policies of the board. In actual operation, however, we find that the administration has a large amount of power in influencing the decisions of the board.

The Community Sector of the Task Environment

The task environment of the community should be viewed by the decision maker in two ways--what it is and what it is becoming. Thus, the decision maker must be aware of the general characteristics of the community and of the trends within it.

The following is a list of community characteristics of which the decision maker should be aware:

General Characteristics of the Clientele

1. Median income level
2. Religious background
3. Racial/ethnic composition
4. Occupational level
5. Educational level
6. Degree of urbanization
7. Community age
8. Age distribution of community
9. Attitudes toward education
10. Attitudes toward social change
11. Attitudes toward the role of the school in the community
12. Attitudes toward specific educational issues
13. Political orientation and participation
14. Behaviors
    a. Leisure time activities
    b. Provision for home study
    c. Participation in educational activities
    d. Membership in community groups
        (1) PTA
        (2) Fraternal orders
        (3) Action groups
        (4) Quasi-educational groups (YMCA, Scouts, etc.)
15. Homogeneity (standard deviation on above variables)
16. Unification (a suggested measure of cleavages within communities)
17. Involvement

General Trends in Community

1. Stability
    a. Turnover
    b. Ecological change (e.g., racial influx, etc.)
2. Polarization (standard deviation at time A - standard deviation at time B)

Community Resources

1. Financial support of schools
   a. Local support
   b. State support
   c. Federal support
2. Non-financial resources
   a. Educational and quasi-educational organizations and facilities
   b. Recreational organizations and facilities

The whole community should be assessed on the above variables. Then subdivisions should be made on the basis of school attendance areas. Thus, we would have a composite picture of the community-at-large, and the sub-units within it.

The Levels of Organization

Parsons (1961) characterizes the social system as having four levels. The highest order level in the hierarchy is the societal level. In descending order are the institutional, managerial, and technical levels.

The societal level consists of the normative orientations and structures of other institutions within the society. The schools operate within the context of the larger society, and (supposedly) in concert with other societal institutions. The educational institution receives resources from these other institutions and, in turn, produces resources for the other institutions. For example, governmental institutions provide tax support and guidelines for education; economic institutions provide resources in the form of taxes and usually provide their plants for educational purposes. In return, the educational institution provides government and business with skilled workers who have a congruent ethic. Since the educational institution must maintain an exchange relationship with the other institutions in society, the other institutions are important factors in the welfare of education. If members of the other

institutions feel that they are not gaining enough profit from their interaction with educational institutions, they will try to reduce their investments in education. Therefore, decision makers within the educational institution must be constantly aware of their functional relationship with other institutions in society.

The institutional level is concerned with the internal structure of education. Unlike education in other Western nations, public education in the United States is highly decentralized. At the institutional level, the best prototype would be state boards of education and some county boards. Though these boards are policy-making bodies, they are not particularly important in this decision making model.

The managerial level consists of the school-district level of organization and is usually identified as "central administration." The function of the managerial level is to oversee the various units of lower levels and coordinate relations among them, as well as between them and the community.

The technical level of the educational institution is the school unit. In the classical organizational model, the technical level is concerned with the production of goods and services. The school, then, is the sector of the educational institution responsible for the production of pupils with the necessary skills and attitudes for their survival in society, as well as for the survival of the society.

In education, the levels model of Parsons must be slightly altered for one to grasp the structure of the organization. At the top is the societal level, which contains the external contexts of the school district, the basic building block of the educational institution. Within

the societal level would be other formal institutions of society. Usually, state boards and many county boards of education function to adapt the educational institutions to other institutions of society. The community level is the immediate environment in which the school exists. The third level of organization is the managerial level, which conforms to the Parsonian conception of levels. However, it becomes coterminous with the institutional level. The reason for this is that the schools in the United States are decentralized. The technical level is as conceptualized in the previous paragraph.

Levels as Sectors of the Task Environment. Moving up the hierarchy, each level has the higher-order levels as sectors of its task environment. The local elementary school, for instance, has its attendance area, the community which it serves, the school district central office, and the larger society as specific sectors of its task environment.

Using the individual school as our focal point in the macrostructure, we find that the attendance area, the local community, and the school district central office are the most important sectors. It is between the school and these specific sectors that direct exchange takes place. Because of this exchange process, these three sectors play an important role in the decision making process at the school level. For example, if a principal in a particular school wants to revamp his reading program, he must be aware of how willing the clientele in his immediate attendance area are to comply with the requirements of the program, he must be sure that the program does not conflict with the ideas of central administration as to what constitutes a good reading program, and he must be aware of the amount of resources available in the community at large. The

reason that the principal must be aware of these considerations is that the school he leads is involved in exchange processes with these task environments. He exchanges compliance of the people living in the attendance area for achievement of the children. He exchanges success within his school for authority from central administration. The exchange with the larger community is similar to that with the attendance area except that it is more generalized and indirect.

In his concept of levels, Parsons sees power unequally distributed down the levels, with the greatest amount of power at the top. In terms of the decision making model, this conceptualization is too simplistic. The hierarchy of levels does not cover all the task environment sectors of the school. Though the relationship between the central administration and the school is asymmetrical, with central administration having certain powers over the operation of the school, there are certain powers within the school that are not available to central administration because the school has its attendance area as its specific task environment. The central administration must always be aware of the larger community. When they view the attendance area of the school, they must always view its needs in terms of the larger community. Since the school services a more specific task environment, some autonomy must be given to the school in order for it to carry out its function of servicing its attendance area. Though the principal of a school must answer to his superiors in central administration for the decisions he makes, he must also justify them to his clients in the attendance area. Thus, the principal must do a balancing act between the demands of the central administration and the demands of the attendance area, as well as between the demands made upon

him within his own school by teachers and pupils. As we will see, there are different kinds of power in the system, and they are allocated in different ways.

As Blau (1964) indicates, exchange processes give rise to differentiation of power. Using the principal as the focus of the decision making model, we find that he involves himself in exchange relationships with three separate groups: the school staff, central administration, and his clientele (the children and parents of the school attendance area). These three loci of power come into play in the decision making process at the school level. First, they are sources of constraints. A principal must consider the influence of any decision on his relationship to each of these sectors of the task environment. For instance, if a principal desires to introduce a new mathematics program in the school, he must consider the effect of the program introduction on his relations with his faculty, students and parents, and central administration. Second, since there are three separate sectors, the principal has a certain amount of autonomy. When faced with a situation where he is being coerced by members of one sector of the task environment, he can call into play elements from other sectors to free him from such coercion. For example, if the central administration wants him to change his school to a non-graded school, he can muster resistance from faculty and parents to combat that edict. Thus, it is possible for the principal to play task environment sectors against each other--for a while, at least.

The Decision Making Typology

Parsons (1966) identifies three types of decisions made within formal organizations: policy decisions, allocative decisions, and coordination

decisions. Policy decisions are those which "directly commit the organization as a whole and which stand in relatively direct connection to its primary functions" (p. 43). Policy decisions, then, infer a moral commitment on the part of the organization to a course of action. The most general policy decisions in education are made by the board of education. The policies of the board are then translated into more specific policy decisions at lower levels of organization. At lower levels of organization the policy decision becomes more specific. As an example, a school district may make the decision to integrate its schools. At the administrative level, the decision is made to realign attendance boundaries to create greater racial balance. At the school level, the decision to have classes racially balanced is a specific policy decision.

Once a policy decision is made, resources must be allocated to implement the policy decision. The second type of decisions are allocative decisions, which are directed toward implementation of the policies of the organization. Delegation of authority, allocation of responsibility, and mobilization of resources are all allocative type decisions. A principal may try to implement his new reading program by buying new materials, instructing teachers in the use of these materials, delegating authority to certain teachers for conducting the program, and assigning responsibilities for care of the materials, reporting on progress, coordination between teachers, etc.

The third type of decisions are coordination decisions. Coordination decisions are concerned with organizational efficiency. In any complex organization, such as the schools, many interdependent units work on similar tasks. Coordinative type decisions are those decisions that effect

the interrelations among the organizational sub-units. Coordinative decisions are designed to integrate the sub-units so they work efficiently in a coordinated effort to achieve the goal established by the policy decision. It may be evident that the remedial reading teacher in a school must work in cooperation with the rest of the teachers in the new reading program. As a result of this need, the principal may establish a routinized method of interaction between the regular classroom teachers and the remedial reading teacher. The principal, then, is trying to create the best functional relationship among the various sub-groups of his organization.

Organizational level is another dimension of the decision making typology. Each decision within the educational organization can be classed as either interlevel or intralevel. Interlevel decisions are those decisions which influence levels below the one at which it was made. A classic example of an interlevel decision is when a school board decides to integrate its schools. The original decision was made at the societal levels, affecting many school districts across the nation. The school district's compliance with the 1954 Supreme Court decision has a direct effect upon the schools within the district. Though the decision was made at the societal level, it affects the levels below it. An intralevel decision is one that is concerned with one specific level of the organization. Though the decision may have effects upon lower levels of organization, the effects are indirect. For example, the school administration may decide to reorganize itself to function more efficiently (a coordinative decision). This may change the relationships between certain administrators and the schools, but the

effects on the individual schools are indirect until an interlevel decision is made as a result of the organizational restructuring.

Thus, we have two dimensions by which decisions are classified: the type of decision and the extent of the direct effect of the decision. Since we have three types of decisions (policy, allocative, and coordinative) and two levels of pervasiveness (intralevel and interlevel), there are six different types of decisions possible. Figure 1 indicates the types of decisions made:

	Decision Type		
	Policy	Allocative	Coordinative
Pervasiveness	1	2	3 — Interlevel
	4	5	6 — Intralevel

Figure 1: Decision making Typology

The Type 1 decision is the interlevel policy decision. The interlevel policy decision is one that effects the level at which it is made and one or more levels below it. A good example of a Type 1 decision is the decision of the California State Board of Education that the biblical account of the creation is to be taught as a <u>scientific</u> theory rivaling Darwin's theory of evolution.

The only decision makers who can make interlevel policy decisions are those people formally designated to establish policy for the organization

or organizational unit as a whole. In education, most policy decisions are formally made by boards of collectivities, rather than individual decision makers. Congress, the Supreme Court, boards of education, and superintendents are the major policy decision makers entrusted with interlevel decisions.

Type 2 decisions are interlevel allocative decisions. Interlevel allocative decisions generally are decisions relating to delegation of authority and responsibility. An example of an interlevel allocative decision was the Supreme Court's decision that it was up to the individual states to integrate their schools in the way they saw fit. The delegation of authority for school integration to state and local institutions was an allocative decision.

A type 3 decision is the interlevel coordinative decision. The interlevel coordinative decision is exemplified by the school district sponsoring teacher institutes for classroom teachers concerning guidance techniques in the classroom so that teachers and guidance counselors do not work at odds. Most orientation weeks that school districts plan for teachers have as one of their prime goals influencing the awareness of the teachers concerning their relationships with other personnel of the school district, such as coordinators, specialists, administrators, etc. Thus, the function of interlevel coordinative decisions is to get the school district as a whole moving toward the same ends. It is important to note that there are very few interlevel coordinative decisions made outside the central administration level of educational organization. The principal, in his unique position as liaison between the central administration and the school, has the role of coordinating efforts of the school with the other units in the district.

A Type 4 decision is an intralevel policy decision. An intralevel policy decision is one concerning the internal dynamics of a specific level of organization. For example, a teacher can decide that the main goal of her classroom is to teach children proper classroom behavior. The establishment of proper classroom behavior as a high priority item has consequences primarily for the classroom unit.

A Type 5 decision is an intralevel allocative decision. Intralevel allocative decision are mostly those concerned with resource allocation. For example, a principal is given a certain budget for stocking materials for the school year. He (and his staff if he desires) allocates the money for supplies for various school programs.

The Type 6 decision is the intralevel coordinative decision. This is one of the major types of decisions that elementary school principals make. The principal is responsible for the coordination of the efforts of the teachers towards the goals of the school. There needs to be articulation between grades. Grouping of pupils is an intralevel coordinative decision. Much of the principal's time is spent in coordinating activities between the various sub-units within his school.

The relationship between interlevel and intralevel decisions is very important: the greater the amount of interlevel decisions, the less the autonomy of lower echelon decision makers. Thus, we can measure the degree of bureaucratization within a school district by the amount of interlevel decisions that are made. This points out a basic weakness in a model that focuses on only a single decision maker. His latitude of decision making is circumscribed by factors over which he has no control. For example, a principal in a highly bureaucratized school district will only be allowed

to make Type 5 (intralevel-allocative) and Type 6 (intralevel-coordinative) decisions, while principals in other school districts are allowed to make Type 4 (intralevel policy) decisions as well as to advise on decisions of Types 1, 2, and 3.

One implication of the macrostructural analysis of this model is that all decisions and decision makers must be viewed in the context of the task environment. Included in the task environment of any educational decision maker are other decision makers. The task environment of any organization or organizational unit provides sources of constraints and autonomy for the decision makers within the organization.

Remembering that the school is in an exchange relationship with its task environment, recommendations for innovation must be made with the task environment in mind. That is, each sector of the task environment must receive profit from the innovation. Most innovations require heavier investments on the part of the task environment. There must be the possibility of greater profit on the part of the task environment for the risk-taking investment in innovation.

The principal has been identified as the key person in the innovation process. This may be the case, since he is involved in exchange with the central administration and the attendance area of his school. However, because of these exchange relationships, a conservatism is built into the role of the principal. First, he must please his superiors in order to keep his job. Second, he must keep his teachers pleased, because as the leader of the organization of the school he must legitimate his own power over the teachers by exchanging his skills in getting the job done for willing compliance of the faculty to his directives. Third, he must

keep an ear to the clientele which his school serves. Since they are exterior to the formal organization, they are almost always the most passive sector of the task environment. However, he must make sure that they are placated enough so that they do not actively oppose the school. Because of this network of relationships, most principals are content to keep the ship on an even keel. We will examine this more closely in the discussion of the microstructure. Suffice it to say that most principals carry out their roles in a low cost, low investment, low risk, low (but steady) profit situation. Innovation means raising risks, costs, and investments for an unknown profit.

The principal may be the key man to educational innovation, but he needs help. The Elementary School Evaluation KIT should use him as the key. However, it is extremely important in terms of the macrostructure that other key members of the school's task environment be included in the evaluation and in the presentation of the results. This will facilitate recommendations being in terms of needed school board policies, administrative changes, changes in the operations and programs of the school, and changes in the community and its relation to the school; and it will help specify those recommendations which the task environment sectors feel will yield profit for them.

Irrationality in the Macrostructure

Though the problem of irrationality will be taken up in great detail in the exploration of the microstructure, there are types of irrationality that are specific to macrostructural properties. First, a definition of a rational decision is needed. A rational decision is a decision which is made solely on the basis of knowledge of all alternatives and the consequences of all alternatives. The rational decision in such cases is the

one which produces the greatest profit in the long run. That is, it is the decision that produces the greatest reward for the least cost. A purely rational decision is best simulated by a computer that plays chess. All possible moves and counter-moves are programmed into the machine. When an opponent moves, there exists a single best counter-move that the computer can and does make.

However, since education is an open system, there are an infinite number of possible inputs in any educational decision, and an infinite number of outcomes. All educational decisions include an element of faith. That is, value orientations are very important in educational decision making. The job of the Elementary School Evaluation KIT is to lessen the influence of value orientations on educational decision making, or at least to make the decision maker aware of his value orientation and its consequences in his decisions. Because total knowledge of the system is impossible, there is no such thing as a totally rational decision. All real-life decisions have non-rational aspects.

Irrationality in the macrostructure is best represented by conflicting decisions. For example, a school broad may make a policy decision on an issue and allocate resources in such a way that the policy is subverted. Rogers (1968), in his analysis of the New York City School System, found that schools were built that actually increased racial segregation in spite of the district's policy of desegregation. This type of irrationality is a conflict between policy decisions and allocative decisions. Another type of irrationality in the macrostructure is the conflict between policy and coordinative decisions. For example, a school district decides to improve its reading program. That is its stated policy. The

coordination effort is homogenous grouping, which does not improve reading of the children, but merely increases the variance on reading scores. The third type of irrationality is conflict between allocative and coordinative decisions. For example, a school district will have curriculum committees composed mostly of teachers; yet not provide them with research personnel, reading materials, or secretarial help. The decision to coordinate the activities of the various schools by including teachers from them to work on curriculum is conflicted by failure to provide resources, or failure to give the committee any decision making power of its own.

Summary

The macrostructure of the system is composed of various sectors of the task environment which influence the decision making process by providing sources of constraints and autonomy for the decision makers. The school has certain functions that are determined in terms of its various task sectors. The success of the school depends on how well it satisfies the needs of its task environment. That is, it must involve itself in an exchange process with its various sectors in such a way that mutual profit results. The decision maker must be constantly alert to the possibility of declining profits on the part of any sector of his task environment. The results of this functional problem is usually a situation of low investment, low cost, and low (but steady) profit. However, one problem is that task environments are not stable entities, but are constantly in flux. Therefore, in order to keep profits up, the school must change to meet the new needs of the environment. However, the situation is such that the schools are not changing as fast as their environments, thus creating a situation of declining profits on the part of the school, and greater activism and dissatisfaction in the public that it serves.

One problem with the educational system is that it does not have an adequate feedback system so that it can react to its environment. The Elementary School Evaluation KIT is an attempt to provide such a cybernetic network. The decision typology provides a key as to what type of decisions are made, where they are made, and by whom. Since the school is an open system operating in close interaction with its environment, the cybernetic approach to the environment provides a clue as to how the Elementary School Evaluation KIT can be used to improve educational decision making and ultimately make the schools a more functional institution in American society.

THE MICROSTRUCTURE

We now address ourselves to the question, "How does a decision maker make decisions?" The examination of the microstructure will be an attempt to develop a rationale for examining decisions, decision makers, and influences on the decision making process. As a result of this analysis, we hope to be able to answer questions such as the one posed above.

In this paper the microstructure is defined as the individual decision maker and his immediate context. Since the decision making model focuses on the school principal, the microstructure is defined as the principal and the school for which he makes decisions. However, the theoretical aspects of the microstructure apply to all decision makers within formal organizations.

First, let us ask the question, "What influences a decision maker?" That is, what aspects of the environment and of the decision maker himself influence his decisions. For each decision, there are three categories of

influences. First, there is the task environment or context of the decision. Second, there is the value orientation of the decision maker. Third, there is a set of alternatives.

Focusing on the principal, his task environment can be divided into several sectors. First is the decision making hierarchy above him. Second is the community in which his school exists, more specifically, his attendance area. Third is the staff of his school. The fourth sector of the principal's task environment is the pupils. The principal, when making a decision, will have to consider the effects of that decision on the various sectors of his task environment.

The simplest decision must have at least an alternative that has a go - no go choice. The set of alternatives available to a decision maker is very important to the process. Sometimes a decision maker may be faced with a myriad of alternatives to a question that needs deciding, such as "How do I improve my reading program?" Other decisions may be limited to compliance or non-compliance with an order.

Probably the most important aspect of any decision is the value orientation of the decision maker. The value orientation of the decision maker acts as a filter through which information must pass. Information is analyzed and evaluated through comparision with past experiences. The validity of the information is determined, in large part, by how it fits in with past experiences and values of the decision maker. Thus, based on the values of the decision maker, some information will be rejected, some will be held suspect, and some will be accepted. Not only will the information be filtered, based on its content, but it will also be filtered on the criterion of its source. For example, following the Bay of Pigs

incident, President Kennedy is said to have lowered the value of the information given him by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Values are orientations based on previous experiences. The value structure of the decision maker will strongly influence the kinds of payoffs he anticipates from making a particular decision. A rational decision is one in which the decision maker selects the alternative that maximizes his payoffs.

The Function of Information Communication. Communication of information in a social system has the intended function of developing consensus on the definition of the decision making situation. Information is defined herein as data such as that provided by the School Evaluation Project. If decision makers up and down the hierarchy define a situation in the same way, the probability is greater that they will make the same decision. The assumption of this model is that if decision makers have the same definition of the situation and the same value system, they will come to the same decisions. Therefore, the basic function of an information system, such as the Elementary School Evaluation KIT, is to provide decision makers with approximately the same perception of the situation. However, the same information will be interpreted in different ways by different persons, in different roles, with different value orientations.

Even though this is the case, the provision-of-information function of the Elementary School Evaluation KIT is a valuable service because it produces a set of givens concerning the task environment. The decision makers, then, can at least agree as to the amount and type of information provided, even though they may differ on the value of that information and the efficacy of using it in the decision making process. With the

provision of information, a decision maker cannot say, "We don't have that problem here," and get away with it in the face of incontrovertable evidence to the contrary.

The Decision-Making Microstructure. The decision-making process, whether individual or group, is viewed as a cost-benefit analysis. Rational decision making is done on the basis of maximization of payoffs. It is assumed that decisions are made in such a way that when the decision is made, the decision maker expects greater payoff than by making any other decision.

We must first define terms. The basic terms of this model are: cost, reward, payoff, and values. Since the other terms are defined in terms of values, we will attempt to clarify the concept of values first. Homans (1961) states that the term value has two components: first, that something has value when it reinforces behavior, and second, that when given an alternative, the decision maker will choose X rather than another alternative. It is this second aspect of value that we are talking about; a value or valuation is the placement of positive or negative affect upon an object or course of action.

This particular definition of value is necessary to our decision-making model. For example, if a principal values the approval of the central administration more than the approval of his teachers, he may make quite different decisions than if his values were reversed. The concept of values points up the need to find the various reference groups and their importance to the decision maker. Carlson (1964) found that decisions to adopt modern math programs were closely related to the amount of status the decision maker had among his peers. Many times a decision maker has to choose

between constituencies. The basis on which he makes his choice is how much value he puts on each constituency. He will chose that constituency which is of the most value to him.

This brings up an interesting point. Value can have both intrinsic and extrinsic connotations. In this model, it does not matter whether the value is intrinsic or extrinsic. A principal may value his faculty because they are human beings and as such are intrinsically valuable, or he may value them because their cooperation makes his job much easier than if they do not cooperate. It is not why the decision maker values, but rather what he values, that is important in this decision making model.

Cost, then, is is viewed simply as a negative value. In terms of decision making, a cost is an alternative that must be forgone in a particular decision making situation. For example, a principal is faced with an angry parent whose child has been wrongfully abused by a teacher. If the principal does not defend the teacher, he risks losing the allegiance of that teacher, and even censure of the whole faculty for not protecting them from parental intrusion into the affairs of the school. If he takes the teacher's side of the issue, he risks losing the cooperation of the parent. The usual action in this case is that the principal will tell the parent that he is sure the teacher could not have done such a thing but that he will investigate the claim. This generally ends the interaction with the parent. However, if the teacher is at fault, the principal lets him know his displeasure. This example illustrates the intricate balancing of costs the principal must go through to make a decision. The principal, in this case, is trying to mimimize his costs by assuring the parent that if something is amiss, it will be taken care of, and by not violating the norm that the principal stands behind his teachers.

A reward is the opposite of cost. It is a positive value attached to something or some course of action. Reward is synonomous with benefit. Though there are so-called extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, in the final analysis, even an extrinsic reward must be perceived by the receiver as beneficial or it is not a reward. Reward, like cost, is subjectively defined in terms of a particular value orientation.

Payoffs are the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards a decision maker receives as the result of a particular decision. Payoffs can be viewed in terms of the value system of the decision maker. For instance, one decision maker may view his payoffs in terms of making the organization run smoothly, while another may see his payoffs in terms of making a name for himself as an innovator in the field and leader among his professional colleagues. Each decision maker will try to maximize his payoffs by making decisions that conform to his image of what a good decision maker ought to do.

The rational decision maker makes decisions based on long-term profits over short-term gains. However, it is very difficult to define short-term and long-term. For example, a principal can incorporate all sorts of innovative programs in his school to impress his superiors. However, rapid innovation may alienate his faculty. His gamble is that he will be promoted before the teachers in his school react in open rebellion. Thus, long-run and short-run are relative terms in decision making. The principal in the above situation may reap very high gains in the short-run. However, he is running the risk of tremendous loss in the long-run.

In terms of the microstructure, we can develop a typology based on costs and rewards. Dividing costs of a decision into high-cost and low-cost decisions, and rewards into high-reward and low-reward decisions, we have four

kinds of decisions as perceived by the decision maker. Figure 2 illustrates the typology:

		Cost: High	Cost: Low
Rewards	High	Crucial	Positive
	Low	Negative	Incidental

Figure 2: Cost-Reward Decision Typology

The four types of decisions have various implications for behavior of the decision maker. The crucial decisions which incur high costs and high rewards are the most important to the decision maker. When faced with a crucial decision, the payoff will depend upon reducing the costs of the decision. The crucial decision will get the most attention and will probably be delayed as long as possible, so that information can be gathered and a rational decision can be made. Except in cases of emergency, a decision maker faced with a crucial decision will seek advisement. The Elementary School Evaluation KIT focuses on crucial decisions. If a decision maker is trying to reduce the costs of making the decision, he is going to need information that will help him. One way of reducing costs for any decision maker is to spread accountability over a wider area of the system. The Elementary School Evaluation KIT, if utilized properly, will force the principal into situations where he must make crucial decisions. Part of the function of the widely representative evaluation and innovation constituency or committee is to spread accountability over more participants in the system.

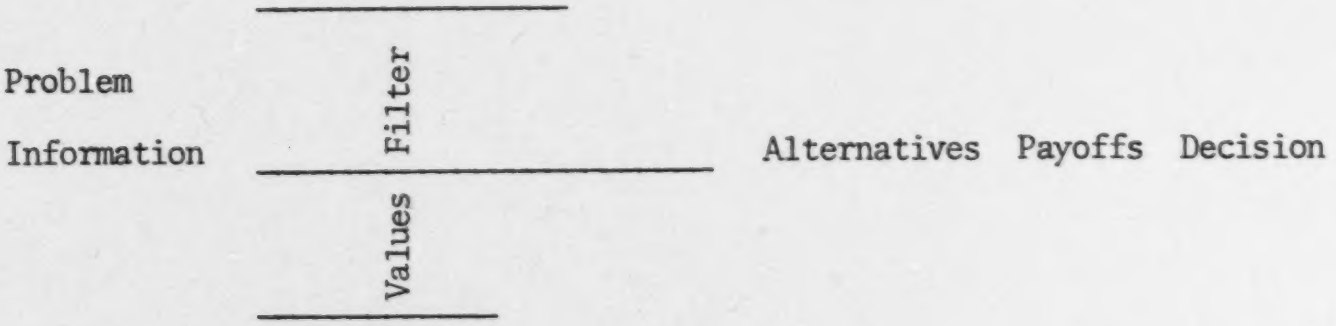
Characteristic of the positive decision is that it is a relatively clear-cut, easily made decision, characterized by high rewards and low cost. A positive decision is one such as a principal receiving a telephone call from the central office asking him if he would be able to use $14,000 in Title III funds for his educational program. In most cases, the decision to accept is an easy one. However, to give an example of how values play a part in decision making, for a true individualist the decision may be a crucial one because his value system does not permit him to accept federal funding for education. Thus, the offer of $14,000 in Federal Funds may force him to choose between his own personal value system and the situation in which he finds himself.

The negative decision is one in which the costs are high and the rewards are low. These decisions are usually made necessary by circumstances that are imposed upon the organizational unit by forces outside it. For instance, a school district loses funds that it expected to receive. The principal is told he must reduce his faculty by two members. His choice as to who to release is a low-reward, high-cost decision. Unless pressured, a decision maker will avoid such decisions.

The low-cost, low-reward decisions are termed incidental decisions because of their lack of strong consequences. It is hypothesized that incidental decisions are the first to be delegated to lower levels of the organizational hierarchy. When faced with incidental decisions, the decision maker will delegate them or make them in an automatic way, or try to increase the reward. An example of an incidental decision would be deciding upon what kind of format to use for the school letterhead.

The Microstructure of the Decision-Making Process. We are now ready to explore the internal dynamics of the decision making process within a decision maker. Though the model is quite simplistic, it outlines the major variables of the decision making process. Figure 3 indicates the process of decision making within the individual:

Figure 3: Microcosm of the Decision Making Typology



It is a truism that before a decision can be made, there must be a problem. Even more importantly, however, a certain aspect of the situation must first be perceived as a problem by the decision maker, or else there is no decision to be made. In a rational situation, the problem will be viewed as a set of alternative solutions. Each alternative will have its payoffs, based on its attractiveness to the decision maker in terms of his value system. From a balance of rewards and costs comes an analysis of the payoff for each alternative. In a rational decision, the alternative that has the best payoff is chosen.

To give an example of the decision making process, a principal realizes that his reading program is not doing what it should. His school's mean score on a particular reading test is well below the mean for the district even though the socioeconomic composition is average for the district. Thus, a problem exists. The principal feels that he must do something about the problem. He begins thinking about alternatives. He may solicit

the advice of his faculty, his superiors (at much social cost!), or even the community (at greater social cost). He may even go to the literature. As information is gathered, it is filtered through the decision maker's value screen. The filtering process produces various alternatives with their perceived payoffs. Each alternative will be viewed in terms of its relative rewards and costs. The decision will be made in terms of the alternative or alternatives which are perceived to have the greatest payoff.

This model, in contrast to most other decision making models, includes value orientations in the rational decision making process. Rational decisions are those which are concerned with the discovery and selection of satisfactory alternatives to a given problem (March and Simon, 1958). Irrational decisions are those which are made without consideration of alternatives.

Though values have been discussed as non-rational aspects of the decision making process, this is not to imply that all decisions are irrational; but it is implied that all decisions have non-rational aspects. An irrational decision is one in which profit is not considered. That is, the decision maker does not go through a cost-benefit analysis. Most irrational decisions are intralevel coordinative decisions. These deal with system maintenance. Many times a decision maker will be frustrated by a situation and make a decision he may later regret. Irrationality in the microcosm is almost always a result of an emotionally charged situation. Generally speaking, the immediacy of the situation becomes paramount in the irrational decision.

In education, it is the teacher who makes most irrational decisions. Because of the immediacy of the situation that exists in the classroom,

the teacher must constantly make decisions on the spur of the moment. Jackson (1968), in his study of teachers' perceptions of the classroom, found that teachers develop an ideology that justifies intuitive decision making. The irrational mode of decision making prompted by the here-and-now interaction in the classroom seems to give rise to the acceptance of an intuitive approach to decision making. Thus, we can generalize that the greater the press for an immediate decision, the less rational the process.

Rational and irrational decisions function in different ways in social systems. It is important to know that teachers have an ideology that justifies an irrational approach to decision making. To try to get them to employ more rational methods in the decision making process means that they must be resocialized so that their normative orientations support a more rational process. Even though Jackson does not deal with the problem, it may be that the irrational ideology is specific to the classroom situation, and even more specific to coordinative decisions within the classroom.

Rationalization of the decision making process in and of itself will not improve the process. The problem seems to be that decisions are made without an awareness of the consequences. Decisions have two sets of consequences: anticipated and unanticipated. One function of the Elementary School Evaluation KIT is to reduce the number of unanticipated consequences from a particular decision.

March and Simon (1958) suggest three reasons for unanticipated consequences of a decision. First, the stimulus of a decision may evoke a larger set of responses than intended. Second, the decision itself may include elements not intended by the organizational hierarchy when providing it. A third reason is that "the individual who is supposed to respond

to a stimulus mistakes it for another--because he discriminates inadequately between them--or simply does not respond at all because the stimulus does not define the situation for him completely (p. 35)."

It is assumed that a decision maker does not knowingly make decisions which are not in his own best interest. The problems arising in organizations are not a result of calculated subterfuge so much as they are decisions which create unanticipated problems. Thus, the information communication function of the Elementary School Evaluation KIT should help in anticipating the results of decisions.

Any time a human being must make a judgment on relative value, there is a subjective affect placed in the decision making process. The problem in the microstructure is the unanticipated consequences of decisions. In order to reduce the amount of unanticipated (and dysfunctional) consequences, the decision maker must be aware of the results of decisions under similar conditions.

DECISION MAKING IN COMPLEX ORGANIZATIONS

The Problem of Accountability. Complex organizations are characterized by varied task environments with which they exchange resources and services. Each sector of the task environment makes its own set of demands on the organization. Sometimes these demands are not compatible. In education, for example, children and parents may make incompatible demands upon the school. Probably the best example is seen in the dilemma of the universities. The students are making demands for unprecedented participation, while the taxpayers are demanding that the university keep the students in their traditional roles.

Accountability is concerned with the satisfaction of needs of each sector of the task environment. The university must satisfy the needs of the student and of society. However, in order to make sure the university does satisfy the needs of the student, it must be accountable to the student. Any organization must be accountable to its clients. If there is not formal accountability, there is usually informal accountability. However, the shortcoming of informal accountability is that problems cannot be anticipated; but rather they simply occur and then must be solved. Without formal accountability, the role of the decision maker becomes one of fire fighter. Decisions are made without the advisement of one sector of the task environment. Then that sector reacts, and conflict occurs which the decision maker must then mediate.

When a decision maker does not have formal accountability to one sector of the task environment, formal accountability to other sectors of that task environment is of overriding concern to him. When one or more sectors of the task environment are not accounted for in the decision making process, the situation is dysfunctional for the organization. The organization is trying to survive, but to do so it must have data from all sectors of its environment. If a sector is omitted from the process, the decision maker must make decisions based on data that are insufficient. Accountability forces the decision maker to be aware of a particular sector of the environment before he makes his decision. Sectors that are not formally accountable to tend to be forgotten in the process. This seems to be where unanticipated consequences of decisions most often arise.

In education, students and sometimes the community are forgotten sectors of the school's task environment. This is unfortunate, because

they are the clients of the school. It is obvious that this is also where the greatest discontent is concerning the operation of the schools. One reason for this problem is that there is no formal accountability to the pupils and the only formal accountability to the community comes primarily through indirect methods, such as election of school boards.

Thus, in terms of a functional relationship with the environment, formal accountability necessitates greater input from the environment before a decision is made. Through this process, certain kinds of dysfunctional conflict can be avoided and the organization can more easily perform its societal functions.

Decentralization, Cryptocracy, and the Myth of the Single Decision Maker. As organizations have become larger and have taken on more functions, decentralization has taken place. The old organizational charts do not fit modern complex organizations. More decisions are being made on the advisement of specialized staff members, rather than of line officers. As organizations become more complex, less decision making falls on just one person. Committee structures are established to study problems; sub-committees and task forces are common in large scale organizations. This kind of task-oriented, specialized structure tends to make the pinpointing of the decision making process much more difficult. Thus, the term cryptocracy arises. A cryptocracy is an organization in which the decision making processes are hidden.

In education, the process is the same as in any other large organization. The larger the school district, the more difficult it is to pinpoint where decisions are made. One problem in large organizations is

that when the decision making process is studied, a person is shuffled from committee to committee to find where a certain decision is made. Educators are very adamant about "keeping politics out of education." What this amounts to is keeping the politics of education hidden. Every organization has its internal politics. Knowledge of the political processes of an organization is a source of power to an outsider. Rogers (1968), in his exploration of the bureaucracy of the New York City School System, found that decisions were made in such a way that it was almost impossible to find who actually made a decision directly affecting the public that the school served. The fact is that the bureaucratic structure can effectively hide the process of decision making. Because of the norms surrounding education, the process is even more cryptic.

Therefore, in dealing with a complex system, the notion of a single decision maker is a myth. The principal of a school can make certain kinds of decisions that relate to that school. In most cases, however, the decisions that a principal makes are merely administrative. That is, they are intralevel, coordinative decisions. Other types of decisions, such as policy decisions, are made somewhere in the morass of the administrative echelons in what teachers affectionately call the "head shed."

Informal Processes. Until now, we have been primarily concerned with the formal aspects of the organization and their relationships to the decision making process. However, as Carlson's research (1964) indicates, informal processes have a heavy influence upon the nature of the decision making process.

Within a formal organization, an informal system develops in relation to the formal system. In addition to his formal role, each individual in

the organization has a certain informal role as well. Thus, each member of a bureaucratic system has two types of power: formal and informal. The formal role has power invested in it; legally, a member of a bureaucracy has authority over certain areas of action within the system. However, this is not the only source of authority within the system. Informal leadership structures arise out of the exchange of favors for esteem. Person X may need person Y's help on a particular job. Upon receiving person Y's help, person X becomes indebted to person Y. This indebtedness can increase if the services X needs are recurrent. Person Y gains power over X by furnishing him scarce resources.

As the informal system develops, a status hierarchy develops which, though dependent on the formal system, is separate from it. For example, a principal who has low status among his peers can make the same recommendations as a high status principal and get no positive reaction. Another principal, because of his high informal status, may get quite a bit of positive reaction.

There are three ways in which the Elementary School Evaluation KIT might cope with the informal aspects of the social system. The informal system could be ignored. However, if it were ignored, then the planning and execution of change becomes more a matter of chance. As Homans (1950) indicated, the informal system is extremely important to the functioning of any social system, and can subvert even the most important goals of the organization. The second alternative would be to measure or "get at" this shadow system. However, this is a costly venture, and is especially dangerous for outside investigators to involve themselves in, because they would need an "inside dopester," to avoid attention while measuring variables that are extremely sensitive to the members within the system.

The third alternative is to try to minimize the effect of the informal system. There are several ways to do this. First, associate the endeavor with an outside agency that has high status itself. Second, try to involve as many levels of the organization in the project as feasible. Finally, give the project high visibility, which will increase the status of the participants.

Conflicts. Though conflict has been touched upon several times, we have not yet faced the problem directly. This particular discussion of conflict will be concerned only with intraorganizational conflict. That is, we are going to deal with conflict within the confines of the organization, rather than between the organization and its task environments.

It was once thought that conflict within an organization was pathological. However, more recent analysis of conflict has indicated that certain kinds of conflict are good for an organization. In the words of Lewis Coser:

> Internal social conflicts which concern goals, values or interests that do not contradict the basic assumptions upon which the relationship is founded tend to be positively functional for the social structure. Such conflicts tend to make possible the readjustment of norms and power relations within groups in accordance with the felt needs of its individual members or subgroups....
>
> Internal conflicts in which the contending parties no longer share the basic values upon which the legitimacy of the social system rests threaten to disrupt the structure (1956; pp. 159-164).

Functional conflict provides the organization with a cybernetic loop. Conflict, if used to the advantage of the organization, helps it adjust to its surroundings. Conflict functions to keep the organization dynamic, aware of its environment. As conflict arises, organizational

structures arise to handle the conflict in an orderly manner and to solve the problems that created the conflict in the first place. As old problems are solved, new problems arise and create new conflicts.

Organizations have various ways of coping with problems. Generally, they fall into two categories of reaction: one is to deal with the problem; the other reaction is to ignore it. The organizational problem is similar to the man who has a cold. He can deal with it in many different ways. He can put a mustard pack on his chest; or go to a steam room and sweat it out; or perhaps he can make a mixture of herbs, tie it in a leather pouch, and wear it around his neck. He could also take a cold tablet and spend a day or two in bed. Or he could possibly ignore the fact that he had a cold. With any of these actions, it is possible that the cold may go away. However, the decision he makes will influence the probability of his catching pneumonia. The problem with organizations seems to be that conflicts are ignored until they become overwhelming, and adequate planning cannot be done to take care of the situation. In social systems, problems tend to compound themselves rather than go away. Therefore, the choice becomes one of dealing with conflict as it comes or ignoring it until it cannot be ignored any more. The choice within a changing environment becomes one of evolution, revolution, or dissolution.

INNOVATION

Innovation as Accomodation to the Environment. To remain viable, the organization must remain sensitive to its environment. A healthy organization is flexible, reconciling the needs of the environment with the internal needs of the organization. Innovation is the process of organizational

change through which this reconciliation takes place. Obviously, the process raises the tension level within the organization and invites conflict. This is not a negative aspect; as we have seen, conflict is necessary for the vitality of the organization. However, for the innovation process to sustain the dynamic relationship between the organization and its task environment, the decision maker must be ever aware of the balance of tension within the organization and its task environment.

Thus, one must ask what characterizes a good decision? One prerequisite for a good decision is that everyone affected by the decision has been consulted and tentatively agrees that it is in the interests of all concerned. This means that good decisions are defined in terms of their accountability. If administrators, teachers, parents, and pupils agree that it is a good decision to individualize reading instruction, then the decision to individualize reading instruction is a good one for the time being. It may be that as the program is worked out there are many problems. Perhaps there are so many problems that the program is not feasible. However, the cooperating parties are in a position to amicably work out another plan of action. No doubt conflict is created by such a decision. However, if the people who were involved in the decision are not alienated by the consequences, rapprochement is possible with less probability of polarization on the issues.

Decisions can be evaluated not only on content but also on the process. A decision to innovate may use the finest program ever devised by man. However, the process of implementation of such a decision may alienate participants so much that the plan is doomed to failure because of the conflict

surrounding the method in which the decision was made. As a result of these dangers, many organizations are moving from the classical bureaucratic model, with its lines of decision making, to a model based more on participatory democracy.

The consequences of a good decision are twofold. First, it results in an optimum of organizational tension. There is controversy within the organization, there is a high participation rate, and alienation is at a low level. Second, the relationship between the organization and its environment is one of exchange with high investments and high profits.

SYNTHESIS

The Decision Making Typology. By combining the decision making elements of the macrostructure and the microstructure; we have a total of 24 different types of possible decisions. Obviously, there are some blank cells. But the decision types now look like this:

Figure 4: Decision-Making Typology

Decision Type		Policy		Allocative		Coordinative	
Cost		High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Interlevel	Reward High						
	Low						
Intralevel	High						
	Low						

We can now develop a set of working hypotheses related to the dynamics surrounding the types of decisions that are made within a social system.

Hypothesis 1: All negative policy decisions are interlevel decisions forced on the particular organizational level by a higher level of organization.

The best example of this phenomenon is the Supreme Court decision to integrate schools. In many school districts throughout the nation, this is a negative policy decision that effects all levels of organization.

Hypothesis 2: An organization will not make a negative decision of any type.

When faced with a negative decision making situation, an organization will choose non-compliance with a directive until such compliance is seen as a better alternative than non-compliance. The organizational level which forces such a decision must either lower the cost or increase the reward for compliance.

Hypothesis 3: The more crucial the decision, the greater the number of people and levels of organization involved in the decision making process, especially concerning policy decisions.

Hypothesis 4: The greater the payoff of a decision, the faster it will be made.

Hypothesis 5: In education, interlevel policy decisions are primarily made by top administration and passed upon by the board of education.

Hypothesis 6: Interlevel allocative and coordinative decisions are handled by middle management. In the educational structure assistant superintendents, curriculum coordinators, and business managers generally make interlevel allocative and coordinative decisions.

Hypothesis 7: Intralevel policy decisions are highly dependent on interlevel policy decisions.

Hypothesis 8: Intralevel decisions at variance with interlevel decisions are a source of organizational conflict.

Hypothesis 9: School principals have very little influence over interlevel decisions.

The Ultrastable System. The goal of all complex organizations is ultrastability. The ultrastable organization is one that can adapt to its changing environment. Paradoxically, the ultrastable system is one that can change its structure and behavior rapidly to adapt to its environment. According to Cadwallader (1964), an ultrastable organization must have (1) specific feedback mechanisms, (2) a certain variety of information, (3) a memory, and (4) decision making facilities.

In short, the ultrastable system must possess the cybernetic mechanisms for change. If the system does not have any mechanisms for change, it will become unstable and die.

CONCLUSIONS

If the Elementary School Evaluation KIT is to be used to improve the decision making process, then the ultimate goal of the KIT must be to provide for innovation that is functional to the school and school system that uses it. The assumption of the builders of the KIT is that improved decisions in the educational organization will bring about a healthy relationship between the organization and its environment and better relations among elements of the organization.

The first responsibility of the producers of the KIT is to provide accurate information relating to critical aspects of the school's task

environment. It is very important that the subjective hunches of school personnel be brought to the level of objective data that is available for critical analysis. This requires more than just a knowledge of the socio-economic status of the community or the racial composition of the pupil population; this information is commonly available to school personnel. The list provided in the discussion of the macrostructure should be considered minimal. It is most important that the task environment be known before decisions are made that are going to effect the relationship between an organization and its environment.

The information collected in the KIT must be provided in such a way that it is easily accessible and easily understandable to educators in the field. A great deal of effort must be made by the producers of the KIT to provide the personnel in the field with a document that is useful in terms of format and understandability.

The producers of the KIT also must take responsibility for the consequences of the evaluation process. Undoubtedly, the process of evaluation is going to create fear and a sense of threat among members of the organization being evaluated. The evaluation process itself implies that things can (and should) be improved. A school or school district that employs the evaluation KIT will be tacitly admitting that they and their employees could do a better job. If the faculty is not consulted on the decision to evaluate, there are going to be a lot of people who feel threatened. In order to stem this problem and other problems mentioned in this paper, the producers of the KIT must provide the school and/or school district with a plan of action for the use of the KIT in the implementation of change that is both feasible and successful. Therefore,

there must be trial runs of the evaluation KIT to see if it will work as hoped or if modifications in the process must be made.

In the final analysis, the KIT is more than just an evaluation KIT. It provides a direction for the school district to innovate. The KIT must be viewed by all persons involved as an instrument of social change. Because of such a usage, it is most important that responsibility for that change be, in part, assumed by the makers and distributors of the KIT.

First, the user must have some sort of goal in mind before the KIT is used. Too many educational tools are used in meaningless ways. This results in a waste of time, energy, materials, and money. The goal can be a very general one; however, it should include a desire to improve education in the school or school district.

Second, the user must be willing to provide resources, personnel, and facilities to administer, evaluate, and implement the KIT and the implications derived from the findings. It is suggested that the KIT not be used until the machinery is established by the district to insure its proper use.

Finally, there should be some indication from the superintendent and the school board that they are willing to cooperate with the evaluators and that funds and expertise will be available to implement the recommendations that will eventually come to them from the school. Unless there is some indication from the policy makers in the district that there are resources that can be allocated if the necessity arises, there is really no reason for using the KIT in the first place. Without this assurance the evaluation KIT becomes an exercise in futility and the questions raised by it become academic.

The analysis of the decision making process in school systems has pointed up problems that make evaluators aware of the fact that the process of evaluation is more than just going into a school or a school district with a package of instruments and saying to the people in the system, "here you are, have fun." If the process of evaluation is handled in such a cavalier way, the evaluation KIT will cause chaos wherever it is used and will create more destruction than positive change. Evaluators must accept the fact that by being evaluators they have already assumed the role of agents of change. The role of evaluator subsumes much more than meets the eye.

Provision must be made for the proper utilization of the information produced by the KIT. Structures should be established for the administration and utilization of the evaluation data. The users should be made aware of the uses and limitations of the data provided.

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